

THIS REPORT HAS BEEN DELIMITED  
AND CLEARED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE  
UNDER DOD DIRECTIVE 5200.20 AND  
NO RESTRICTIONS ARE IMPOSED UPON  
ITS USE AND DISCLOSURE.

**DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A**

APPROVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE;  
DISTRIBUTION UNLIMITED.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (9 May 69) FOR OT. UT 691345

15 May 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 1st Infantry  
Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech), Period Ending 31 January  
1969

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 5b, AR 525-15. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to ACSFOR OT UT, Operational Reports Branch, within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.
2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

*Kenneth G. Wickham*

KENNETH G. WICKHAM  
Major General, USA  
The Adjutant General

1 Incl  
as

DISTRIBUTION:

Commanding Generals

- US Continental Army Command
- US Army Combat Developments Command

Commandants

- US Army War College
- US Army Command and General Staff College
- US Army Armor School
- US Army Aviation School
- US Army Civil Affairs School
- US Army Combat Surveillance School
- US Army Engineer School
- US Army Infantry School
- US Army Intelligence School
- US Army Field Artillery School

20310  
MAY 28 1969

UNCLASSIFIED REPORT

DISTRIBUTION NO FOREIGN WITHOUT APPROVAL OF  
ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF FOR FORCE DEVELOPMENT  
(ARMY) ATTN FOR OT RD, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310

19

AD852772

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HQ, 1st Infantry Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech)  
APO San Francisco 96477

AVEL-0

17 February 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Period Ending 31 January 1969

See Distribution

References: Reg 525-15, HQ USARV, 13 April 1968, PCV Reg 525-2, HQ PCV, 9 May 1968

1. SECTION 1 - Operations: Significant Activities

a. Operations:

(1) The 1st Infantry Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech) was directed to move on 1 November 1968 from AO Kentucky (Leatherneck Square) via DMZ to an area of operation vic of Quang Tri city in Quang Tri Province. (AO Napoleon Saline II). On 10 Dec 68 AO Napoleon Saline II was modified and redesignated as AO Marshall Mountain (See attached Overlay).

(2) The Brigade's mission in AO Marshall Mountain was to conduct strike operations with emphasis on search and clear and cordon and search operations in support of the pacification effort in Quang Tri Province. Those operations also stressed close cooperation and coordination with sector forces as well as with the 1st Regiment, 1st ARVN Division, whose AO coincided with the Brigade's. Intrinsic to the mission was the requirement to align the Brigade's activities with the priorities and programs of the Province and Districts within the AO. The maneuver elements operated in all parts of the AO, however, the following were the normal operating bases:

| <u>Organization</u>   | <u>Operating Base (See Incl 1 Overlay)</u>               |
|---|--|
| TF 1-61 Inf: Employed primarily as a pure mechanized battalion with cross attachments of tank companies and the cavalry troop for specified missions. | LZ Sharon<br>FSB Tombstone                               |
| TF 1-11 Inf: Operated normally with three rifle companies and a tank company  | LZ Sharon  |
| TF 1-77 Armor: Operated normally as a tank heavy force with OPCON of an infantry company and the cavalry troop.                                       | LZ Nancy<br>Wunder Beach<br>FSB Hardcore<br>FSB Hai Leng |
| 5th Arty Bn: Operated from three main FSB's and displaced as required to provide spt for operations deep in enemy Base Area 101.                      | LZ Sharon<br>LZ Nancy<br>FSB Hai Leng                    |
| Bde HQ<br>5th Arty (-)<br>75th Spt Bn (D Co at LZ Sharon)<br>517th MI Det<br>407th RRD<br>298th Sig Co  | Red Devil  |

(3) Narrative description of activities: 1 Nov 68 to 10 Dec 68: During this period the Brigade moved south from AO Kentucky (Leatherneck Square) near the DMZ to the more populated area of Quang Tri Province.

FOR OTUT  
691345

INCLOSURE

AVML-0

17 February 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Period Ending 31 January 1969

The move was completed early in November and the Brigade demonstrated its flexibility by rapidly shifting from the tactics of limited conventional war against major NVA units along the DMZ to counterguerrilla/counterinsurgency operations in and near the populated areas.

b. Background:

(1) Initial Operations: When the Brigade first moved into the Marshall Mountain AO, strike operations and cordon and search operations were conducted in coordination and cooperation with the 1st ARVN Regiment and Quang Tri Sector. The strike operations were conducted in enemy base areas where the enemy was known to collect rice, concentrate for strikes against populated areas of Hai Lang, Mai Linh and Triou Phong Districts, and prepare the infrastructure for infiltration into the populated areas. The cordons were conducted at My Chanh, Thuong Xa and Mai Dong. The cordons proved to be successful, resulting in 75 enemy KIA, 128 VC/NVA captured, and 18 Hai Chanh, with 84 weapons captured. However, the strike operations did not produce any significant results as the only enemy encountered were small groups that were attempting to avoid contact.

(2) Intelligence Estimate: Early in December analysis of the enemy situation, coupled with an analysis of the strike and cordon operations that had been conducted in the Brigade's AO revealed that:

(a) NVA and VC main force units had been forced out of the populated areas.

(b) The enemy tended to move in small groups, generally avoided contact, and refused to fight mechanized forces (tanks and mounted infantry).

(c) A shortage of food and personnel compelled the enemy to move from Base Area 101 to the populated areas to get food and intelligence, and to recruit replacements for his depleted forces.

(d) The enemy had a limited offensive capability.

(e) Without the protection of NVA or VC main force units, the VC infrastructure was vulnerable. In order to survive, the members of the infrastructure had to move, and conduct their business during the hours of darkness.

(3) Operational Concepts: To take advantage of the enemy situation and to further the pacification effort it was determined that the Brigade's mission could be best accomplished by the following:

(a) To interdict the enemy movement in the AO by emphasizing small unit (Squad and fire team) operations. These operations included ambushing, patrolling, and detailed search techniques using probes and mine detectors. During the hours of darkness as many as 56 ambushes in one night were conducted by the two (2) Infantry battalions. To stress the offensive spirit, the small unit operations came to be known as "Hunter Killer" operations.

(b) To increase the number of dismounted infantry units available to the Brigade by habitually conducting combined daylight search and clear operations, and patrols with the regional and popular forces. These combined operations were to include integrating PF squads and platoons into US mechanized infantry and tank platoons, assigning a PF squad to one tank as a means of transportation and fire support for the PFs, using US tank and mechanized platoons to block while regional and popular forces searched an area, and conducting joint strike operations.

(c) To continue the destruction of the VC infrastructure, by continuing emphasis on cordon and search operations to be conducted in coordination and cooperation with the 1st ARVN Regiment and regional and popular forces.

INCLOSURE

AVBL-0

17 February 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Period Ending 31 January 1969

(d) To retain a ready reaction force prepared to exploit a contact or to relieve engaged units. The ready reaction force was to consist of one rifle company. The company would continue to conduct interdiction operations, but one platoon would remain in areas where it could be picked up by helicopter within twenty (20) minutes, and the remainder of the company was to be capable of being picked up within one (1) hour.

(e) To integrate the operations of the 1st ARVN Regiment, Quang Tri Sector and the Brigade by maintaining continuous liaison and coordination with the 1st ARVN Regiment, each district and Quang Tri Sector. As an example of the coordination required, the 1st Battalion, 61st Infantry (Mooh) conducts up to thirty (30) ambushes, hunter killer teams or raids a night while the district forces within the battalion's AO conducted up to 60 ambushes and raids per night. These ambushes must be well coordinated so that friendly forces do not inflict casualties on each other.

(4) Trainings: With the increased emphasis on squad and fire team sized operations, it was necessary to insure that the squads could call for and adjust artillery fire, that marksmanship be stressed and that the quality of leadership at the small unit level be improved. In order to accomplish the above, maximum advantage was taken of schools offered by 3rd Marine Division. To date the Brigade has had the following personnel trained by elements of the Division:

- (a) 3rd Marine Division Sniper School - 17.
- (b) 3rd Marine Division Senior NCO Leadership School - 68.
- (c) 3rd Marine Division, 3rd Recon Battalion Training - 23.
- (d) 5th Artillery NCO FO School - 14.

c. Examples of "Hunter Killer" Operations are as follows:

(1) "Hunter Killer" team from 1st Battalion, 11th Infantry employed south of LZ Sharon on 28 January 1969 spotted four (4) NVA/VO in the open, called for and adjusted artillery on enemy resulting in two (2) NVA KIA confirmed. Fire was called in by a sergeant E-5 who had graduated from the 5th Artillery FO School the previous day.

(2) "Hunter Killer" team from 1st Battalion, 11th Infantry, (6 men led by a SP4) employed south of LZ Sharon on 24 January 1969 engaged 8 NVA with sniper fire, resulting in three (3) NVA KIA confirmed, three (3) weapons captured. The sniper was trained by 3rd Marine Division and was using a Marine Corps Model 700 Remington Sniper Rifle on loan from 3rd Recon Battalion.

(3) During the month of January the 1st Battalion, 61st Infantry (Mooh) employing "Hunter Killer" teams in an area North of Gia Dang fishing village utilizing search and probe techniques captured nine (9) NVA (including a captain), six (6) VO, three (3) VOI, one (1) VOS, one (1) GD and eight (8) weapons. The enemy were found hiding in cleverly concealed spider hole bunkers.

d. Combined Operations: While the Brigade was gearing itself to small unit operations, combined operations were being conducted on a daily basis.

(1) Since 2 November 1968, 37 combined cordon and search operations have been conducted by the Brigade in conjunction with its sister ARVN Regiment and RF and PF forces. Of the 37 cordons conducted, nine (9) of them have been major operations involving one or more US (Army or Marine) battalions and one or more ARVN battalions and/or provisional RF/PF battalions. Those major cordons have lasted from two (2) days to two (2) weeks, with the average being about five (5) days.

AVNL-0

17 February 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Period Ending 31 January 1969

(2) In addition to the cordon and search operations, combined strike operations, patrols, and civic action projects have been conducted. In Trieu Phong District the coordination and cooperation between the 1st Battalion, 61st Infantry (Mech) and the District forces is so well established that the companies of the 1st Battalion, 61st Infantry (Mech) operate on a daily basis with one or more PF platoons integrated right into the company. The effect of these combined operations has been to increase the rifle strengths of the battalions by one (1) or two (2) companies daily, increase the effectiveness of the search operations, and strengthen the fighting spirit of the PF platoons.

e. Results:

(1) Combined Operations: The results obtained by combined operations since 2 November 1968 are as follows:

- (a) VUI Captured: 252
- (b) POWs (NVA, VO, VCMF, VOLF): 159
- (c) HoI Chanh: 28
- (d) EN KIA: 311

TOTAL: 750

- (e) Weapons captured: 259
- (f) Material Captured: See inclosure 2.

(2) Small Unit Operations (1st Infantry Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized) totals only): Following are results of 1st Infantry Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized) operations since 10 December 1968 when the Brigade began its emphasis on small unit operations.

- (a) Total enemy killed or captured: 89 (52 KIA, 37 Captured).
- (b) FR Casualties: 5 FR KIA (1 to SAF, 4 to mines, booby traps and 122mm rockets) and 66 FR WIA.
- (c) Weapons Captured: 48

f. Civic Action Results: The following civic action projects were accomplished in support of the pacification effort:

(1) Five bridges constructed (two timber trestle bridges on Rt 560, two dry spans in Mai Linh District, one Lambretta bridge connecting the Gia Dang market with the Stilwell road).

(2) Roving MEDCAP: This unique MEDCAP includes regular visits to key population locations by a "Super" MEDCAP team, supplemented by laboratory capabilities to aid diagnosis and uses a referral case history system that makes MEDCAP more effective for serious cases requiring continued care.

(3) MEDCAP: 10,934 patients treated.

(4) Support of Schools: 3,050 school kits distributed, 4 schools repaired.

(5) Miscellaneous:

- (a) 40 English language classes for 463 in attendance.
- (b) 31 carpentry kits, 4 mid-wife kits distributed.
- (c) Christmas presents: 2,500 toys, 5,000 cookies.

AVBL-C

17 February 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Period Ending 31 January 1969

(d) 19 children of 1st ARVN Regiment widows receiving educational support under the Big Brother Program (volunteer).

(e) Culverts installed and village roads improved in Mai Linh and Trieu Phong Districts.

(f) 43 students being supported under the General Walt Scholarship Fund.

2. SECTION 2 - Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Evaluation, and Recommendations

a. Personnel:

(1) Non-organic support units.

(a) Observation: The 1st Infantry Brigade is increasingly called upon to function as an area command for non-divisional/brigade troops.

(b) Evaluation: As the major Army command in Quang Tri Province, the 1st Infantry Brigade, a tactical unit, is increasingly called upon to provide support functions for non-divisional/brigade troops in the area. Current examples of area support furnished by the Brigade are finance support (The Brigade is responsible for paying and administering the finance records of over 10,000 men which is twice the Brigade's strength.), area coverage provided by the Brigade Staff Judge Advocate, (One legal officer serving 10,000 men), graves registration responsibilities, area medical support provided by Company B (Med), 75th Support Battalion (One medical company serving almost as many men as a division medical battalion serves), criminal investigation support and the area Provost Marshal activities performed by the Brigade Provost Marshal. The only additional personnel attached to the Brigade to perform the above functions has been a finance detachment. In effect, the Brigade, a tactical unit, is supporting support units and because the number of personnel supported is twice the authorized strength of the Brigade, the sections involved are not able to support the Brigade as fully as they would like to.

(c) Recommendations: That a TDA organization be authorized to allow the Brigade to properly control and manage the support mission that it has inherited. A study is being conducted to determine the requirements and a request for an appropriate TDA will follow.

(2) Demolitions Pay

(a) Observation: Demolition specialists of Co A, 7th Engineers are not authorized demolition pay.

(b) Evaluation: Demolition specialists in the line platoons of A Co, 7th Engr Bn (A Combat Engr Co) who work with demolitions on a daily basis do not draw demolitions pay. These specialists are used to destroy enemy bunkers, destroy ammunition when an EOD team is not available and destroy enemy mines. The demolitions specialists have been recommended for demolitions pay many times, but the pay has not been authorized because only members of a unit with a TOE designation of "EOD" are authorized demolition pay.

(c) Recommendations: That the Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel, Department of the Army designate the demolition specialist spaces in the A Co, 7th Engineer TOE as EOD spaces so that A Co, 7th Engineer personnel will qualify for demolition pay UP Par 2-21 AR 37-125. Request for space designation will follow.

(3) Promotion:

(a) Observation: A considerable number of Sgt E-5s in the Brigade are either AUS soldiers or NCO Course graduates, holding squad leader positions calling for grade E-6.

(b) Evaluation: The nonpromotable status of Sgt E-5s, except for special promotion allocations which are extremely limited in number, poses problems for this unit. These individuals are performing the required duties of squad

AVBL-C

17 February 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Period Ending 31 January 1969

leaders in authorized TOE positions but cannot be appropriately rewarded for their actions by promotion to next higher grade because of the requirement in the Army Regulation that they have a minimum of 3 years service.

(c) Recommendation: That one of the following be adopted.

1. Brigade size units having personnel in the category mentioned be allocated 20 special allocations a month without regard to time in service.

2. A change be made to AR 600-200 stipulating special provisions on promotion of NCO Course graduates.

3. Promote deserving E-5s to E-6 after performing the duties of a squad leader in a combat zone for four (4) months.

b. Operations:

(1) Tracker Dog Utilizations:

(a) Observation: Operations conducted in populated areas negate much of the usefulness of Scout Dog Teams.

(b) Evaluation: The majority of enemy activity in this area has been in well camouflaged bunkers, though many times well defined trails are evident. Tracker Dog teams would be much more useful in this environment to find and ferret out the enemy.

(c) Recommendation: That Tracker Dog teams be provided to the Brigade to provide adequate support of units operating in populated areas.

(2) Attachments of RF/PFs:

(a) Observation: The District Hqs of Tricu Phong, Hai Lang, and Hai Linh have attached squad size RF/PF to our units for operations within their districts.

(b) Evaluation: The RF/PF when operating in squad and platoon size elements with the Ddo's units prove to be effective and helpful to a unit conducting search and destroy operations. Normally each company operates with a platoon of RF/PF and a platoon with a squad of RF/PF. This gives the RF/PF troops confidence and it has been noted they attempt to equal US forces in efficiency.

(c) Recommendation: That the technique of combined operations with RF/PF operating with US forces should be encouraged for FMF units conducting similar pacification missions.

(3) Clearance of Supporting Fires:

(a) Observation: Since relocating from the area of operations along the DMZ, the procedures for fire support coordination with particular emphasis on political clearance and the safeguarding of friendly aircraft have become more complex and require more personnel and equipment than authorized by TOE to accomplish these functions.

(b) Evaluation: The clearance of supporting fires and safeguarding of aircraft has become more complex due to the additional agencies from which a clearance must be received prior to firing, and the additional reporting procedures to protect aircraft. To effectively support the complex procedures mentioned above it has become necessary to supplement the present Brigade liaison section with additional personnel and equipment, i.e., increasing the present section to thirteen (13) personnel and five (5) AN/VRC-46 radios. Additionally, three (3) noncommissioned officers and one (1) AN/VRC-46 radio have been located with critical ARVN agencies to expedite the clearance of supporting fires. All personnel and equipment were taken from organic resources within the artillery battalion.



AVML-C

17 February 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned Of Period Ending 31 January 1969

(c) Recommendation: The additional requirements for personnel and radios have been met by reallocation of TOE assets within the artillery battalion. Since this situation of complex fire support coordination is probably peculiar to this area, and not USARV wide, request for TOE changes will be submitted. The request will be for twelve (12) additional men (2 officers, 3 NCOs, and 7 M) and four additional AN/VRC-46 radios. Request favorable consideration of this additional requirement.

(4) Enemy Mining:

(a) Observation: There have been 27 separate mining incidents that involved the tanks of TF 1-77 Armor. In addition, there were 2 APCs and 1 VTR that struck mines. Two of the mining incidents were determined to have been caused by command detonated devices exploded under the tank engine compartments. Both tanks had their hulls pierced by the blasts and were listed as combat losses. However, only one of the tanks caught fire as a result of the blast. The only other tank declared a combat loss hit 2 anti-tank mines during heavy contact in the DMZ. This vehicle then caught fire and although it was recovered, the damage was too extensive to attempt repair. In the remaining twenty-four incidents mine damage occurred in the suspension system. On each tank 2 or more road wheels and road wheel arms were destroyed, twelve or more sections of track were lost, one or more torsion bars were broken, and road wheel arm housings were separated. In several instances, after a tank was repaired and operational again, difficulties were experienced in the linkage and electrical systems, also this situation was most evident in tanks that struck more than one mine. Damage caused by pressure detonated mines was confined to the side of the tank under which the mine exploded. In all of these cases, the tanks were repairable and were returned to their units for further operations. There were six men who sustained injuries in mine incidents. Each injury was minor and all men were returned to duty. Mines encountered by the two armored personnel carriers produced more serious results. Both vehicles were completely destroyed, with one receiving the blast through the crew's compartment and the second carrier catching fire as a result of the explosion. Serious injuries were suffered by the men who were on the vehicle.

(b) Evaluation: The damage to each of the tanks was confined to the side of the vehicle which struck the mine except in the cases where the vehicle caught fire and where the devices were command detonated. It is significant to note that the armored personnel carrier which caught fire used diesel fuel and that although all tanks in use at the time and the VTR were fueled by gasoline, only two tanks caught fire as a result of mine explosions. In almost all of the cases, the tank which detonated the mine was not the first vehicle which passed over the device. In one instance, the anti-tank mine was not exploded until the thirteenth vehicle passed over it. In both the Cam Lo area and in the current area of operations mining incidents began to occur one month after the Brigade began operations. Mines were placed in the tracks left by vehicles on previous operations, however, not in any discernible pattern. Mines most commonly encountered have been the TM-41 anti-tank mine and a home made metallic mine enclosed in a wooden box. Plastic mines have been found along QL-1 during minesweeps, but none have been successfully employed against this unit.

(c) Recommendation: In armor areas of operation a flail, or device similar to the tank mounted mine clearing roller (Ensuro #133) being tested in the 25th Infantry Division, be used to sweep the avenue or route of advance. It is also recommended (and a current practice) that tanks do not drive in old track marks. A successful tactic of countering the enemy's mine warfare effort has been the division of the AO into zones and the use of engineers (with a security element) to sweep the zones for mines.

(5) Tactical Bridging:

(a) Observation: Once tactical bridging is installed for other than short duration tactical operations the Engineer company, which has property accountability, cannot requisition replacement bridging. Required is authorization to re-requisition and someone to gain accountability for the emplaced bridge.

AVIL-C  
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Period Ending 31 January 1969

17 February 1969

(b) Evaluation: Tactical bridging is often used to keep LOCs open. Without authorization to requisition new bridging, once the tactical bridges are used in a static role, all or most of the tactical bridging capability of the Brigade could be seriously depleted. Without procedures to resupply the Engineer company, this situation could seriously hinder the Brigade's tactical operations capabilities. River crossing requirements could easily arise when no bridging is available.

(c) Recommendation: An organization should be designated to pick up accountability upon request of the Engr company. The Engr company should then be able to requisition replacement bridging by citing the transfer of accountability. The requisitioning of new bridging should be possible within a short period of time to provide for tactical requirements.

(6) Squad and Platoon Listening/Observation Posts:

(a) Observations: During the reporting period Brigade operations changed from a limited conventional war in Leatherneck Square and the DMZ to pacification operations in AO Marshall Mountain. With the change to pacification operations and the emphasis placed on small unit operations at night, a situation developed where the individual soldier tended to be less than fully alert during daylight hours.

(b) Evaluation: The danger of the average infantry men in this Brigade fooling overly secure during daylight in an area where pacification operations are emphasized proved to be a real concern. To combat this tendency, the following observation/listening post (OP/IP) system has been placed into effect by the Brigade.

1. Each platoon and/or squad sized unit immediately establishes an OP/IP when occupying a defensive position, or when at the halt during mounted or dismounted operations.

2. At least one member of the platoon and/or squad is on duty in the OP/IP at all times.

3. The OP/IP personnel are under arms with full battle gear, to include steel helmet and web equipment, at all times.

4. The OP/IP personnel are not permitted to speak to anyone except in the line of duty. The OP/IP personnel are not allowed to smoke, eat or take any other action that will distract them from their duties.

5. Other members of the unit do not speak to the OP/IP members, except in the line of duty, nor are the other members of the unit to take any other action which would distract the OP/IP members from their duties.

6. A soldier will not be assigned to OP/IP duty for a period greater than two hours (2), or less than one (1) hours.

(c) Recommendation: That the use of OP/IPs by squads and platoons during daylight be given greater emphasis in officer basic courses, advanced individual training infantry, and at NCO academies.

(7) "Snatch" Operations:

(a) Observations: With its limited helicopter resources (4 UH-1H and 4 OH-6A helicopters) the Brigade has been able to conduct successful heliborne interdiction operations (Snatch operations) against the VC lines of communications.

(b) Evaluation: The Brigade conducts heliborne "Snatch" operations in restricted areas, along waterways or roads and in populated areas. The Brigade uses one UH-1H helicopter with an infantry fire team, interpreter and a national policeman aboard and an armed OH-6A to conduct Snatch operations. The UH-1H flies at 1500 to 2000 feet while the OH-6A flies along the surface of the earth looking for targets.

AVHL-0

17 February 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Period Ending 31 January 1969

1. If people are discovered in restricted areas the team swoops out of the sky and rounds them up. After interrogation by the policeman the VO suspects are transported to the detainee collection point and the innocent civilians are transported to the district headquarters.

2. When a "Snatch" operation is conducted in other than restricted areas the operation is conducted as a random check. The snatch team swoops out of the air, secures the area and rounds up the people to be searched. After the area is secured the police representative checks ID cards and searches the sampans, boats, vehicles, carts or loads that the people are carrying. The search is thorough, quick and courteous. Those people that have valid identification and are not carrying contraband are released. VO suspects, people with false or suspicious ID cards, or people carrying contraband are detained.

(c) Recommendation: That units with insufficient helicopter resources to conduct eagle flights use "Snatch" operations as a means of interdicting the VO lines of communications, and making movement more difficult for the VO. A Vietnamese policeman must accompany all "Snatch" operations that are conducted in unrestricted areas.

✓ c. Trainings:

(1) Patrols and Ambush Training:

(a) Observation: The DGT/ALT graduate is not proficient in the basic fundamentals of patrolling and ambushing.

(b) Evaluation: Patrols and ambushes are at the heart of all small unit operations. Proficiency in this area will lead to proficiency in the more conventional aspects of small unit tactics.

(c) Recommendation: Greater emphasis be placed on patrol/ambush training at DGT/ALT level, as well as all other ATPs.

(2) FO Procedures Training:

(a) Observation: With the increased emphasis on squad and fire team operations it has become necessary to insure that the squads and fire teams be able to call for and adjust artillery fire.

(b) Evaluation: The Brigade has found that the only way to successfully interdict the enemy's movement in the AO is to emphasize squad and fire team operations to include saturation ambushing and patrols.

1. The seven (7) infantry companies of the Brigade have conducted as many as sixty-one (61) ambushes in one night. There is some evidence, in captured documents, that the numerous night ambushes and the constant daylight patrolling has started to produce in the enemy a sense of frustration and a fear of movement between the base areas in the mountains and the populated lowlands.

2. The Brigade has discovered that these small unit operations can be conducted in any type of terrain. As long as a reliable means of communications is established between the squad or fire team and its parent unit the Brigade can respond to any emergency with fire support and a ready reaction force in time to prevent the unit concerned from getting into serious trouble.

3. In order for the fire support for the squad or fire team to be adequate the leader of the team must be able to call for and adjust artillery fire. To insure that the small unit leaders in this Brigade are capable of calling for and adjusting artillery fire the 5th Bn, 4th Artillery has conducted a forty (40) hour course in FO procedures. Although necessary, the forty (40) hours required for the course means that the squad or fire team leaders are not with their squads or fire teams for about five (5) days.

AVM-C  
SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Period Ending 31 January 1969

17 February 1969

(c) Recommendation: That Sgts (E-5) with an 11 B, 11E or 11D MOS be given a course of instruction in artillery FO procedures before being assigned to Vietnam. The above mentioned personnel should be given the opportunity to call for and adjust live fire missions (Fifteen to twenty students can successfully practice on the same mission if the training is properly conducted).

d. Intelligence: None.

e. Logistics:

(1) Fork Lift Capability for Class II and IV Yard

(a) Observation: The one (1) 6,000 lb Rough Terrain Fork Lift now authorized is not enough to support the requirements of the Brigade.

(b) Evaluation: One additional 6,000 lb Rough Terrain Fork Lift should be authorized for use in the Class II and IV Yard.

(c) Recommendation: Recommended that one (1) additional fork lift be authorized. Request for appropriate MTOE change is being initiated.

(2) Refrigeration for Medical Items

(a) Observation: Brigade Medical Supply does not have any means of storing items which require refrigeration.

(b) Evaluation: It has been found that although this unit is provided three (3) biological refrigeration units for the use of the Bde Medical Supply, these refrigerators must stock items that require refrigerating for all organic attached, and supporting units within the Bde leaving insufficient room for vaccines, penicillin and other drugs.

(c) Recommendation: That medical units deploying with a Brigade and having a brigade medical supply responsibility should have a large family type refrigerator as part of the TO&E for the purpose of storing items such as vaccines, penicillin and other drugs. Request for appropriate MTOE change is being initiated.

(3) M548 Track Cargo Vehicle for Cavalry Units in Northern I Corps

(a) Observation: Trafficability in Northern I Corps area prevents resupply of all classed supplies by wheel vehicle.

(b) Evaluation: The suspension and drive components of the M54 truck will not survive the rugged terrain of Northern I Corps. The M54 truck does not have the necessary trafficability to follow the highly mobile troop throughout the area of operations. The M548 track cargo vehicle has the capability to go wherever the troop goes without hindering the operations.

(c) Recommendation: That the MTOE be modified so as to allocate 2 M548 track cargo vehicles to cavalry troops operating in Northern I Corps. One to be used as a class III resupply vehicle, and the other to be used to resupply all other classes of supply.

(4) M548

(a) Observation: The 548 as a fuel resupply vehicle, especially for mogas, has produced excellent results. Therefore, a reliable back up fuel pump for fuel transfer is needed along with the 50 GPM pump.

(b) Evaluation: Companies and sections are hampered in their operations when needed fuel has to be hand pumped.

(c) Recommendation: Transfer an M113 bilge pump and mount it so that the pump can be used as an emergency back up pump. This can be operated electrically giving about 40 GPM of fuel transfer.

AVHL-C

17 February 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Period Ending 31 January 1969

(5) Recovery and Lift Capability of the Cavalry Troop

(a) Observation: The organic recovery and lift capabilities of the separate cavalry troop are inadequate for the assigned mission.

(b) Evaluation: The M578 light recovery vehicle is inadequate for its assigned mission. The light recovery vehicle is not capable of recovering the M48A2C or M48A3 tank assigned to the cavalry troop. The lift capability of the M578 is insufficient to meet all the requirements of the separate cavalry troop within the Brigade.

(c) Recommendation: A substitution of the M88 recovery vehicle would provide a recovery capability concurrent with the mission of the troop.

f. Organization: None.

g. Other: None.

3. SECTION 3 - Headquarters, Department of the Army Survey Information:  
Omitted.

2-Incl - Incl 1 w/d, Hq, DA-  
as

*James M. Gibson*  
JAMES M. GIBSON  
COL, INF  
Commanding

DISTRIBUTION:

2 - CINCSARDA3 ATTN: GPOPODT APO 96558  
2 - HQ, USARV ATTN: AVHOC-DST  
3 - CG, XXIV Corps ATTN: G-3

**BLANK PAGE**

AVII-GCT (17 Feb 69) 1st Ind

MAJ Sanderson/rjd/2506

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Period Ending 31 January 1969

DA, Headquarters, XXIV Corps, APO 96308 23 MAR 1969

TO: Commanding General, United States Army, Vietnam, APO 96375

1. The 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech) Operational Report - Lessons Learned has been reviewed at this headquarters and is forwarded in accordance with USARV Regulation 525-15.

2. Except as noted below, HQ, XXIV Corps concurs without further comment on commander's observations, evaluations and recommendations listed in Section 2 of the report. Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning promotion, para 2a(3), page 5. Concur with all recommendations; however, the first recommendation provides the best solution to this situation. The 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech) has an excess of E-6's assigned which limits regular monthly promotion allocations as vacancies are not available. An excess of E-5's also exists of which a major portion are individuals with less than the time-in-service and time-in-grade requirements for promotion to E-6. The excess in assigned E-6's is found in the combat service support units and in base camp support activities, while the combat units have a large number of E-5's performing E-6 squad leader duties. Special allocations are required to promote deserving individuals in the combat units.

b. Reference item concerning clearance of supporting fires, para 2b(3), page 6. Concur. One solution to the three requirements of political clearance, air warning and fire support coordination is to consolidate the three functions in a single agency, e.g. the brigade FSCC. Current TOE's do not provide sufficient personnel and equipment to accomplish air warning requirements. The magnitude of the fire support coordination requirements exceeds the capabilities of the brigade liaison section. The equipment and personnel recommended are considered an accurate assessment of the FSCC/liaison section needs.

c. Reference item concerning tactical bridging, para 2b(5), page 7. Instructions on the procedure to requisition new bridging, when tactical bridging is replaced as installed property, are contained in USARV message 61425 from AVHGD-SM, DTG 240023Z Jul 68 (U). This message has been brought to the attention of the unit.

d. Reference item concerning forward observer (FO) training, para 2c(2), page 9. Concur in principle. Recommend this training be included in the NCOC courses conducted at the Infantry and Armor centers. At other installations FO training for personnel in MOS 11B, 11D and 11E could be included as part of the NCO Academy's curriculum. It is not considered feasible to include this training as part of POR qualification.

AVII-GCT

23 MAR 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned for Period Ending 31 January 1969

e. Reference item concerning the M548 track cargo vehicle for cavalry units in Northern I Corps, para 2e(3), page 10. The cavalry troop assigned to 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech), A Trp, 4th Sqdn, 12th Cav, has been notified to request authority for M548 track cargo vehicles by submitting an MTOE. Recommend CDC Armor Agency review TOE 17-107G to determine if M548 track cargo vehicles should be provided to all ground cavalry troops.

f. Reference item concerning M548 as a fuel resupply vehicle, para 2e(4), page 10. Liaison with the S-3, 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech) disclosed that the normal fuel pump is in short supply, and the M113 bilge pump is readily available. Though this pump was not designed to pump POL products, it functions when so employed and is an excellent field expedient.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

*H. R. Taylor*  
H. R. TAYLOR  
CPT, AGC  
Asst AG

Oy Furn:  
DA ACSFOR  
CO, 1st Bde, 5th Inf Div (Mech)



AVHGC-DST (17 Feb 69) 2d Ind  
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for 1st Infantry Brigade,  
5th Infantry Division (Mech) for the Period Ending 31 January  
1969

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 963751 2 APR 1969

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army, Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-DT  
APO 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly Period Ending 31 January 1969 from Headquarters, 1st Infantry Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech).

2. Comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning Promotion, page 5, paragraph 2a(3) and 1st Indorsement, paragraph 2a; nonconcur. Provisions currently exist for the promotion of outstanding EM to grade E6 without regard to time in grade and service criteria. Presently, two percent of the authorized E6 strength may be promoted from E5 to recognize demonstrated potential and outstanding performance. This percentage is double that which is authorized outside Vietnam. In view of the intent of the program to limit these promotions to only the most outstanding individuals, the two percent limitation is deemed sufficient.

b. Reference item concerning Tracker dog utilization, page 6, paragraph 2b(1). Concur with recommendation that 1st Brigade 5th Infantry Division (M) be provided Combat Tracker Teams. The 1st Brigade 5th Infantry Division (M) has been furnished necessary information for requesting a combat tracker detachment for permanent assignment.

c. Reference item concerning M548, page 10, paragraph 2e(4), and 1st Indorsement, paragraph 2f; concur. While adequate information on the design characteristics of the pump is not available for evaluation, the concept of an electrically operated pump is sound. Recommend that the proposal be referred through channels to Army Material Command for evaluation and possible adoption of this or a similar pump. Unit has been advised to submit an equipment improvement recommendation.

d. Reference item concerning Recovery and lift capabilities of the Cavalry Troop, page 11, paragraph 2e(5); concur. The cavalry troop is normally authorized the AR/AAV M551 (Sheridan). The M578 is adequate to support these vehicles.

AVHGC-DST (17 Feb 69) 2d Ind

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned for 1st Infantry Brigade,  
5th Infantry Division (Mech) for the Period Ending 31 January  
1969

The 1/5th Mechanized Cavalry Troop was issued M48's. The 1/5th Mech has been advised to initiate MTOE action to obtain additional M88's. Pending resolution of the MTOE action, 1/5th Mech was advised to consider redistribution of their six M88's to provide support for the cavalry troop.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



C. D. WILSON

1LT, AGC

Assistant Adjutant General

Cy furn:

1st Inf Bde, 5th Inf Div (Mech)

XXIV Corps

GPOP-DT (17 Feb 69) 3d Ind (U)

SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 1st Inf Bde, 5th Inf Div (Mech)  
for Period Ending 31 January 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 6 MAY 1969

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, Department of the  
Army, Washington, D. C. 20310

This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding indorse-  
ments and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



C. L. SHORTT  
CPT, AGC  
Asst AG

MATERIAL CAPTURED 31 OCT 68 - 31 JAN 69

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| RICE, . . . . .                               | .65 TONS   |
| SALT, . . . . .                               | .365 KILOS |
| AP MINES, . . . . .                           | .6         |
| AT MINES, . . . . .                           | .4         |
| 60MM MORTAR RDS . . . . .                     | .27        |
| 82MM MORTAR RDS . . . . .                     | .15        |
| 4.2MM MORTAR RDS. . . . .                     | .7         |
| AT ROCKETS, . . . . .                         | .10        |
| CHICOM GRENADES . . . . .                     | .11        |
| M26 GRENADES, . . . . .                       | .7         |
| 12.7MM . . . . .                              | 1,250      |
| 750 LB BOMBS DESTROYED, . . . . .             | .5         |
| 500 LB BOMBS DESTROYED, . . . . .             | .1         |
| MORTAR FUZES, . . . . .                       | .400       |
| MINE FUZES . . . . .                          | .300       |
| EXPLOSIVES, . . . . .                         | .371 LBS   |
| VN PIASTRES . . . . .                         | .17,000    |
| 105/155 DUDS RIGGED AS DOODY TRAPS, . . . . . | .9         |
| BOXES MEDICAL SUPPLIES, . . . . .             | .2         |
| 40MM, . . . . .                               | .30 RDS    |

Incl 2

